. (e) what oiher measures Governmeat proppse to lake to check desertification?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRl ARVIND NETAM): (a) No, Sir. An area uf 362 Iakh ha. accounting tc about 11% of the total geographical ,area from desertification.

(b) So far, an area of 446 iakh ha. f.23% of the total affected area has been treated under various programmes. They include, the core activities, such as land resources develop-r resources development, and tation and pasture development.

Idition to above, integrated land u ..opment, integrated, deve--opment grammes, developing dronghi preparedness and developing comprehensive anli-desertification prog-rammes are proposed to check leserti. fication in the country.

Low Yield of Indian Sheep

481. SHRI RA1ENDRA PRASAD MODY; Will the Minister of AGRI-CULTURE be pleased to state:

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(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that on an average an Australian sheep yields five kgs. of wool annually, while the corresponding figure for India is barely 700 grams; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Govern ment for increasing the production of wool and improving its quality parti-cularly in Rajasthan?

THE MTNISTER OF STATE TN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) Yes Sir, but with the difference that the corresponding figure for India is about 900 grams.

(b) The Government has taken up several steps for sheep/wool development programmes in the country inclu, ding the State of Rajasthan with the basic objective of increasing quality ana

v of wool as well as the body weight of the animals. The Government has taken up the following programmes:

n.lral Sheep Breeding Farm, liissar for the production and of superior exotic Rams to the States.

2. The National RamjBuck Prdouetion mme and programme foi Rabbit Development. This is a 'Sponsored Programme under which State Departments ot .Animal Hu: are provided funds.

he Agriculture Development Project (Including Sheep Developd ment) with World Bank assistance is under implementation in Rajasthan State.

Agricultural Labourers ia tbe Oonntry

4S2. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Agricultural labourers in the country with State-wise details;

(b) the amount of wages they earn with details;

(c) the reasons for a large number of agricultural labourers in the State ot Bihar-

(d) whether there is any scheme to provide better employment opportunities to the labourers in Bihar: and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE TN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRl ARVIND NETAM): (a) and (b) A Statement showing the Agricultural Lab-ourers and Daily Wage Rates of Unskilled Agricultural Labour is annexed. (See below).

(c) The prevalence of high poverty level coupled with lack of occupational